

APPENDIX B

EQUAL ACCESS FUND PROJECTS

These descriptions of projects funded in the 2003-2004 grant year (October 1, 2003 to September 30, 2004) demonstrate the vast range of legal services to low-income Californians that are made possible by the Equal Access Fund. In each description, the name of the nonprofit legal aid provider that conducts the project is followed by the title of the project. The providers include both those that deliver services directly to individual clients or groups of clients and also statewide support centers that provide back-up service to local providers. For further information about these providers and projects, see Chapter 2.

AIDS Legal Referral Panel. *Housing-Related Legal Services for People with HIV* provides legal advice and representation to people with HIV/AIDS who are at risk of losing their rental housing. Two attorneys serve clients throughout the San Francisco Bay Area. Extensive outreach to organizations primarily devoted to helping people of color or individuals in recovery ensures services are available to underserved groups, including people with substance abuse disorders or mental illness. A large and growing portion of this population has a combination of HIV, mental illness, and/or chemical dependency. The elimination of the stress of housing problems and the prevention of homelessness can increase the success rate of complex HIV treatment regimens and mental illness or substance abuse treatment.

Alameda County Bar Association Volunteer Legal Services Corporation. *The Pro Per Family Law Clinic* coordinates several clinics each month where volunteer attorneys give legal advice to self-represented family law litigants in the areas of dissolution, child custody, visitation, paternity, child support, and general family law. These clinics assist some of the 85 percent of family law litigants in Alameda County who are self-represented. Monolingual clients who speak Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, or Vietnamese and clients with limited English proficiency are assisted in the clinics through a partnership with the Legal Language Access Project that provides low-cost translation and interpretation services.

Alameda County Homeless Action Center. *Legal Clinics for Homeless People* provides legal advice, assessment, and referrals at drop-in centers for homeless people in Alameda County. Individuals who both are homeless and have mental health concerns are the primary focus as they generally have a difficult time accessing services. A new Supplemental Security Income application clinic was added this year to help mentally ill clients file their own applications. When clients receive this financial assistance, it helps their economic self-sufficiency and ability to find and keep permanent housing.

Alliance for Children's Rights. The *Guardianship Program* provides legal protection for children in Los Angeles County who live with grandparents, relatives, or others. An attorney and a paralegal assist caregivers in becoming legal guardians, and provide other legal assistance necessary for the caregivers to obtain health care and other needed services for the children. A new aspect of this project helps create joint guardianships with other relatives for the children of low-income parents with life-threatening illnesses. The Guardianship Program works in partnership with community organizations, child welfare agencies, and the Department of Children and Family Services.

Asian Law Caucus. The *Southeast Asian Task Force* is a collaboration of the Asian Law Caucus, Cambodian Community Development, Laotian Community Development, American Viet League, and the Southeast Asian Assistance Center. The task force provides community legal education and legal assistance clinics to the Southeast Asian community in the San Francisco Bay Area and the Sacramento Valley. Their clients are primarily Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Mien, or Hmong. The primary focus is on immigration issues, with a secondary focus on employment/labor and housing. This project was recently expanded to include outreach to nail salon workers, who are largely Vietnamese women with limited English proficiency, to provide them with community legal education about workplace health and safety issues.

Asian Pacific American Legal Center. The *Asian Language Legal Intake Project* provides centralized intake to low-income monolingual or limited-English-proficient Asian-language-speaking callers in the greater Los Angeles area who need legal services. The project is a partnership between the Asian Pacific American Legal Center, Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles, Neighborhood Legal Services, and Legal Aid Society of Orange County. Individuals call one of the toll-free hotlines that has an advocate who speaks their specific language: Mandarin, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, and Khmer (Cambodian). The advocates give callers counsel and advice, some brief service, and referrals on a wide variety of legal issues. If callers need additional legal assistance or representation, they are referred to one of the partner agencies that provides that assistance. The Equal Access Fund grant pays for bilingual attorneys and paralegals who speak Mandarin, Cantonese, and Vietnamese.

Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach. The *Asian/Pacific Family Violence Project* provides multilingual legal services to survivors of elder abuse and domestic violence in San Francisco and Alameda Counties. Grant funds are used to reach underserved Mien, Cambodian, Laotian, Vietnamese, Thai, Filipino, and other South Asian communities. An advocacy team of an attorney and an advocate or social worker provides assistance with obtaining restraining orders, custody, support, and other family and elder law issues, as well as representation in immigration matters. The teams also work with volunteer attorneys who provide representation of project clients.

Bar Association of San Francisco Volunteer Legal Services Program. The *Eviction Prevention Project* of the Homeless Advocacy Project focuses on preventing unnecessary evictions and curtailing homelessness for low-income renters, especially those who have mental disabilities. Clients receive legal counseling from volunteer attorneys and staff advocates and

representation in court in eviction actions. The project also provides trainings for management and desk clerks in hotels and subsidized housing and for low-income and disabled renters about tenant rights and responsibilities, particularly accommodation requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Bay Area Legal Aid. The *Domestic Violence Prevention Project* provides legal services to victims of domestic violence in Alameda, Contra Costa, San Mateo, San Francisco, and Santa Clara Counties, including advice and counsel, brief services, full representation, and community outreach and education. Advocates help clients gain safety and stability for themselves and their families by providing assistance with restraining orders, residence exclusion orders, child or spousal support, and related housing or public benefits issues. Advocates also partner with the courts, law enforcement departments, the media, and other public and private agencies to address systemic problems and build public opinion against domestic violence. The project was expanded to San Mateo County this year where the regional office now provides a comprehensive legal services program addressing various needs of domestic violence survivors. A domestic violence regional counsel (funded in part with grant funds) ensures cross-county coordination of services for victims who flee from county to county.

Bay Area Legal Aid. The *Low-Income Persons with Disabilities Project* in Marin County conducts outreach and education to low-income disabled communities and their service providers. In addition, the project expanded this year to provide direct legal assistance to clients who have disabilities. The services are focused primarily on obtaining public benefits and health coverage, and include advice and counsel, brief service, and representation at administrative hearings. A primary goal is to assist clients in obtaining Supplemental Security Income to help them receive an income sufficient to meet their basic living needs.

Benchmark Institute. The *Online Learning Project* is an ongoing effort to expand low-cost and easy-access training resources for legal aid staff. The project is developing Web-based legal writing materials that will include resources to help users develop writing skills on the job, along with guides for supervisors and mentors. The project piloted a legal writing tutorial where advocates assessed their skills, completed assignments, and received feedback. The project also offers training materials in other skills and substantive areas, and hosts a statewide Public Benefits e-mail list for legal aid staff in California.

Bet Tzedek Legal Services. The *Family Caregiver Project* assists low-income clients in Los Angeles County who care for elderly and disabled relatives in their own homes by helping families obtain benefits that help them provide in-home care, thus avoiding costly and impersonal institutional alternatives. Legal assistance is provided on such issues as Medicare, Medi-Cal, In-Home Supportive Services, and conservatorship. Educational programs are presented to social workers, case managers, and caregiver support groups. The project targets underserved communities of color, including Latinos, African-Americans, and Asian Pacific Islanders.

Bet Tzedek Legal Services. The *Home Equity Fraud Task Force* provides services to low-income homeowners with accumulated equity who have fallen prey to perpetrators of home equity fraud, predatory lending, and other forms of consumer fraud. Fraud and predatory lending

have a disproportionate impact on seniors, particularly low-income seniors whose primary or sole asset is their home. A task force attorney funded by the Equal Access Fund provides affirmative litigation and community education, helping low-income communities of color in south central Los Angeles and the Asian-American and Latino communities in eastern and central Los Angeles as well.

Bet Tzedek Legal Services. The *Employment Rights Project* represents low-wage workers with wage and hour cases in Los Angeles County. Domestic workers, day laborers, and garment workers routinely are paid less than they are promised and sometimes not paid at all for their work. The project conducts extensive outreach to make sure workers are aware of their legal rights and their ability to seek assistance from the justice system, if needed. Volunteer attorneys are used extensively, providing most of the staffing for the evening clinics, representing numerous clients at hearings, and co-counseling in larger cases.

Bet Tzedek Legal Services. The *Housing Law Project* provides legal assistance to tenants in Los Angeles County facing eviction actions and illegal housing conditions. The elderly and persons with disabilities are the focus of much of the service because they are often targeted for eviction in order to circumvent the rent stabilization laws and bring in new tenants at higher rents. The project's attorney represents these clients, develops solutions to systematic housing legal problems, and recruits, trains, and supervises a network of volunteer attorneys.

Bet Tzedek Legal Services. The *Bet Tzedek Fellowships Program* creates an opportunity for committed public interest attorneys to serve the Los Angeles community while obtaining invaluable career training. Two Fellows represent primarily Spanish-speaking clients in matters including unlawful eviction actions, housing conditions, wage/hour and unemployment hearings, and administrative appeals from denials of public benefits. The Fellows provide effective legal representation during the two-year fellowship program and receive an experience that will prepare and encourage them to continue to work on behalf of the underserved after the conclusion of their fellowships.

California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform. The *Residents' Rights Project* works to prevent and deter transfer trauma for elderly and disabled residents of California's skilled nursing homes who would otherwise be abruptly and illegally transferred. Legal assistance provided to residents of long-term facilities threatened with closure includes prevention of closures, representation of clients at transfer/discharge hearings, and prevention of illegal transfers of residents. The project also provides technical assistance, training, and support materials to legal aid providers that are handling such cases.

California Advocates for Nursing Home Reform. The *Medi-Cal Outreach Project*, through a training and advocacy program for California legal aid providers, enables the providers to assist Medi-Cal-eligible clients aged 55+ and those who are residents of long-term care facilities to receive Medi-Cal and keep the family home under Medi-Cal home exemption rules. The project also trains advocates to represent clients in estate recovery appeals.

California Center for Law and the Deaf. The *Court Access for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing People Project* seeks to improve training and policies and procedures in California courts for

interaction with deaf individuals who need to use court services and participate in judicial proceedings. The project attorney meets with court staff, evaluates the courts' current policies and procedures, and offers materials, presentations, and training to improve services to the deaf community, including communication accommodations. Project staff also works with the Administrative Office of the Courts to improve court access more generally, including distributing the project's court access booklet and assisting the AOC in being a resource for local courts on "deaf friendly" policies and procedures. In addition, the project provides community presentations to inform deaf survivors of domestic violence in the San Francisco Bay Area about their court access rights and how to secure them.

California Indian Legal Services. The *Acorn Project* addresses the need for greater availability of legal resources for Native Americans in California through several interrelated strategies. The development and implementation of a new statewide intake/legal hotline provides intake services as well as advice and brief services for Native American clients, resulting in better access to legal services for those Native Americans who live a long distance from a legal aid office. The creation of self-help and legal education materials on Indian law issues help Native Americans resolve common legal problems without the assistance of an attorney. The distribution of self-help materials through the statewide legal services Web site increases availability of legal information to Native Americans in remote areas of California.

California Rural Legal Assistance. The *Rural Minimum Access Project* added six staff attorneys in offices in Modesto, Stockton, Madera, Coachella, Oxnard, and Salinas. They provide legal assistance and community education for clients on a variety of issues, including domestic violence, consumer fraud, landlord/tenant problems, wage claims, garnishment and attachment of wages, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Unemployment Insurance, and Social Security.

California Rural Legal Assistance. CRLA staff who are community workers of the *Field Sanitation Project* perform field inspections to monitor implementation of agricultural worker health and safety regulations throughout the Central Valley and Central Coast of California. The community workers speak Spanish and five indigenous languages. These inspections have led to an increased awareness among farm labor contractors and growers in California of their need to comply with health and safety laws in the fields. When an inspection finds violations that are not corrected after notice to the responsible individuals, CRLA attorneys pursue other appropriate remedies. The project's community workers also do outreach and speak to farm workers about their rights at a variety of places, including labor camps, clinics, schools, churches, parks, and laundromats.

California Rural Legal Assistance. The *Special Populations Project* extends legal services to often invisible and highly marginalized non-English speakers. Communities served by the project include native speakers of pre-Columbian languages whose isolation in the rural areas of the Central Valley is particularly acute. The project also works with the Southeast Asian Hmong community whose cultural clashes with more mainstream rural California culture have led to community misunderstandings and lack of adequate access to economic opportunity. The project serves 24 counties.

California Rural Legal Assistance. The *Technology Support Project* provides funding for a centralized database that streamlines record-keeping and time-keeping for CRLA advocates and management. It also provides for quicker and easier legal conflict checks and more timely reports to management for oversight of funds and legal work in CRLA's 24-county service area.

California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation. The *Worker's Rights Project* provides statewide legal training, technical assistance, and advocacy support to legal aid providers on workers' rights issues. Project attorneys offer training on such topics as how to prevent or document wage and hour violations and how to prepare and present claims for civil rights violations, such as sexual harassment in the fields. Project attorneys also co-counsel with legal aid attorneys representing agricultural and other low-wage workers. In addition, the project provides training to state agencies on the hazards of the short-handled hoe and other unsafe tools used by agricultural workers.

California Women's Law Center. The *Civil Rights of Pregnant and Parenting Teens Project* is dedicated to protecting pregnant and parenting students' civil rights in California, including the right to remain in their home school and participate in school activities. The project conducts outreach and training about potential discrimination and the law center's Model Policy on the Civil Rights of Pregnant and Parenting Teens. The project focuses on advocates who work with Latina girls and girls from low-income families, collaborates with other legal aid providers, and advocates for school districts to implement more comprehensive policies protecting these students.

Casa Cornelia Law Center. The *Volunteer Attorney Project* represents indigent asylum seekers detained at the detention facility in Otay Mesa, California, who are escaping persecution and torture in their home countries. The project recruits, trains, and mentors volunteer attorneys and conducts orientations at law firms to acquaint attorneys with the compelling need for representation for asylum seekers. Project staff conducts educational sessions to train interested attorneys in asylum law and representation, and experienced staff mentors the volunteer attorneys to ensure quality representation.

Center for Community Advocacy. The *Comité Outreach and Legal Assistance Project* assists low-income individuals, primarily farmworkers, to improve their housing conditions in labor camps, apartments, and trailer parks in Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties. The project trains farmworker tenant committees about their rights and provides legal assistance if landlords retaliate against them for speaking out. The comités traditionally negotiate over repairs to their housing units, but increasingly they are also negotiating about rent increases, which is critical because Monterey and Santa Cruz Counties rank among the least affordable housing markets in the nation.

Center for Health Care Rights. The center's *Expanded Outreach and Legal Services to Low-Income and Multicultural Medicare Beneficiaries Project* ensures that these two underserved populations in Los Angeles County are able to fully access Medicare and Medi-Cal for their health care needs. Outreach strategies include telephone hotline access to legal services provided in 10 languages. Materials and presentations are directed to specific geographic areas with large numbers of low-income older adults. Information about Medi-Cal and Medicare prescription

drug programs is given to clients, in addition to other information needed to improve their access to health care services.

Center for Human Rights & Constitutional Law. The *Rights of Late Amnesty Applicants Project* implements a settlement agreement that provided for immigration legalization to 250,000 long-term residents a year. The project informs applicants of their rights under the settlement agreement, gives referrals to nonprofit legal aid providers, recruits and trains legal aid advocates, and offers ongoing technical support. In addition, the project provides technical assistance to legal aid providers handling LIFE Act applications for legalization. Individuals who are assisted achieve immigration status that helps ensure family unity and stability.

Center for Human Rights & Constitutional Law. The *Rights of Immigrant and Refugee Minors Project* helps immigrant and refugee children detained by the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (formerly the INS) and the Office of Refugee Resettlement. A settlement agreement in *Reno v. Flores* established uniform standards of care and treatment for these children. The project visits the detained children in California, monitors their care and treatment, and initiates court actions, as needed. In addition, the project provides technical assistance and legal support to legal aid providers representing unaccompanied minors.

Center for Law in the Public Interest. The *Heritage Parkscape Project* works to ensure that underserved low-income communities of color have better access to parks, open spaces, and recreation throughout Los Angeles. Compared to other major cities, Los Angeles has very few parks, and it particularly lacks parks in low-income neighborhoods. This multifaceted project works with a diverse coalition of community groups and government agencies to bring needed outdoor resources to low-income communities.

Central California Legal Services. The *Voluntary Legal Services Program* in Fresno County expands legal services available to Fresno County's low-income, rural residents. The project has conducted a major recruitment effort, has worked with the Volunteer Legal Services Program of the Bar Association of San Francisco to recruit urban attorneys to help in rural areas, and has obtained the Fresno County Bar Association's help with materials and training. These efforts increase the amount of free legal assistance that is available in Fresno County, particularly in the areas of consumer law, taxes, immigration, and economic development.

Central California Legal Services. The *Representation of Domestic Violence Victims Project* provides comprehensive legal services to domestic violence victims in Fresno County. The project's goal is to empower underserved populations, including low-income women and immigrants, by providing them legal representation so they will be safe and receive support when leaving an abusive relationship. Legal assistance is given in the areas of child custody, support, visitation, and divorce. In addition to providing legal services, the project works with battered women's shelters, advocacy agencies, the community, and the private bar to increase awareness of and support services for victims of domestic violence.

Central California Legal Services. The *Public Benefits Advocacy Project* funds a full-time advocate to provide legal assistance for clients who encounter difficulties with their applications or eligibility for public benefits that provide cash, health care coverage, or other basic services.

The project offers assistance with a number of public benefit programs including In-Home Supportive Services, Medi-Cal, Social Security, and Unemployment Insurance. Outreach is targeted toward Latino, Southeast Asian, and African-American communities, and individuals for whom English is a second language, in Merced, Mariposa, and Tuolumne Counties.

Central California Legal Services. The *Housing Rights Project* in Tulare County provides legal assistance on housing-related matters, including eviction defense and housing conditions, and education on fair housing laws. In collaboration with local community-based groups, a special effort is made to reach farmworkers, persons with disabilities, and large families (including those in racial and ethnic groups), because of the difficulties these individuals face in locating adequate housing.

Central California Legal Services. The *Outreach and Education Project*, in collaboration with Kings County Family Network, a consortium of schools, parents, and community groups, works to establish neighborhood resource centers that offer outreach and education services. The project places an advocate at each of the seven centers on a rotating weekly schedule to provide families with information on legal matters such as tenants' rights, public benefits, and education. Clients in need of additional legal services are connected with a staff attorney in Visalia.

Centro Legal de la Raza. The *Housing Improvement Program* provides legal assistance on a range of housing issues to low-income renters in Alameda County. Services are targeted toward low-income monolingual Spanish-speaking immigrant families who suffer greatly from a shortage of affordable housing. They often lack familiarity with their rights as renters and are more susceptible to intimidation and threats by landlords. The project provides tenant education workshops, direct advocacy for tenants with landlords, and coordination and collaboration with other groups and government agencies to improve housing standards. It also helps prepare affirmative lawsuits for volunteer attorneys to bring against landlords of multiunit apartment complexes that have grossly uninhabitable conditions.

Child Care Law Center. The *Project to Increase Equity and Access to Child Care Subsidies for Legal Services Clients* pursues the policy development and litigation required to ensure that low-income families in California receive the child care subsidies needed as a work support. The project works with legal aid providers to identify policy advocacy issues, such as the need for retroactive payments to parents, and also advocates for solutions in the California Legislature. The project analyzes improper delegation of child care policy and procedures from the California Department of Education to child care agencies, and develops strategies with legal aid providers for correcting these issues, including negotiation, administrative advocacy, public education, and litigation. In addition, the project developed and distributes a comprehensive child care manual for legal aid advocates.

Children's Rights Clinic of Whittier Law School. The *General Children's Advocacy Clinic* addresses the civil legal needs of minor children in Los Angeles and Orange Counties who are out of the custody of their natural parents. Most clients are in the care of nonparent relatives or are part of the juvenile dependency or delinquency systems. Law students, under the supervision of the clinic's staff, provide children with advice and counsel or direct representation in probate guardianship or family law custody actions, in collaboration with four other legal aid providers.

The project's goal is for the child to reside outside of the juvenile justice system, in a safe and stable home with a caregiver equipped to meet the child's social needs.

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations. The *Fair Hearings Trainings Program* provides training to volunteer attorneys and legal aid advocates on administrative welfare issues. The trained attorneys and advocates then represent legal aid clients in administrative fair hearings, with any needed technical assistance provided by the staff of the coalition.

Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organizations. The *Traveling Training Program* provides training to legal aid attorneys and paralegals in California. A number of workshops are offered on substantive areas that affect low-income clients. The coalition provided workshops on welfare advocacy and fair hearing representation and other major welfare issues.

Contra Costa Senior Legal Services. The *Elder Abuse Project* provides assistance to individuals over the age of 60 who are the victims of abuse. The project gives free legal advice and counseling, as well as assistance in obtaining and enforcing protective orders. Elderly individuals who are frail, low-income, or minority are targeted for services. These services are designed to protect clients from further harm by their abusers, who are usually family members.

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. The *Deinstitutionalization Project* works statewide on behalf of disabled persons who are institutionalized or at risk of institutionalization, often due to a lack of affordable, accessible housing and long-term care services. The project researches public housing and subsidized private housing, particularly in areas with a chronic shortage of accessible units (including the San Francisco Bay Area), to see if priority is given to persons with disabilities. The project also assists in California's efforts to implement a plan, as mandated by the U.S. Supreme Court, to prevent unnecessary institutionalization of the state's most vulnerable population and provide for movement out of institutions at a reasonable pace. In addition, the project's attorney provides technical assistance to legal aid attorneys who represent institutionalized individuals.

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund. The *Special Education Under the New IDEA Project* provides expertise about the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) to legal aid advocates and parent support centers throughout California. The project attorney provides extensive analysis of the IDEA, prepares materials, and provides training and technical assistance to ensure that children with disabilities receive the special education services required under federal law.

East Bay Community Law Center. The *Family Advocacy Services Team* assists families in Alameda County to lift employment-related sanctions through compliance with the work requirements of CalWORKs, or to obtain an exemption for disability or other reasons. Using a unique multidisciplinary model, the team negotiates with the social services agency, connects adults with education, job training, and employment opportunities, and links entire families with health, domestic violence, and other supportive services. The team also educates clients and community organizations about CalWORKs, monitors the local implementation of CalWORKs, and collaborates with other agencies to identify solutions to problems, such as meeting the needs of clients with mental health and language access concerns.

Elder Law and Advocacy. The *Litigation Department* focuses on cases that address emerging legal issues and systemic problems affecting elders as a whole in San Diego and Imperial Counties. Such issues include financial investments fraud, predatory lending, and nursing home residents' rights. Community education is also given to educate and warn elderly individuals of possible illegal consumer schemes.

Family Violence Law Center. The *Domestic Violence Services Collaborative* provides legal services to low-income victims of family violence in Hayward, in collaboration with the Alameda County Bar Association's Volunteer Legal Services Corporation. Services include advice, preparation of petitions and orders, and representation to secure restraining, harassment, and child support and custody orders. Many victims of domestic violence are unable to obtain these orders, which increase their safety, without representation. Clients served by the collaborative are primarily low-income women of color.

Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance. The *Rural Hotline Project* provides counsel and advice, brief service, self-help assistance, and referrals to low-income individuals in the poorest rural communities of Kern County. Many of these rural residents are undereducated, speak limited or no English, and have mobile employment opportunities (agricultural) that are seasonal and unstable. Legal assistance is provided in the areas of housing, domestic violence, public benefits, consumer issues, and access to health care.

Greater Bakersfield Legal Assistance. The *Food Stamp Project* works to end hunger in Kern County by changing the way the Food Stamp program is operated and administered. The project assists applicants by ensuring that applications are processed correctly and wrongful denials are reversed. It also works with appropriate agencies to address systemic problems. The project's objective is to enhance the effectiveness of the Food Stamp program through increased participation of eligible individuals.

HIV and AIDS Legal Services Alliance (HALSA). The *Enhancing Access Through Outreach Project* makes legal services available to people living with HIV/AIDS at geographically convenient locations in Los Angeles County where they also receive HIV case management services and medical care. A program specialist conducts on-site intake as well as legal needs assessments that triage clients' legal needs. A HALSA staff or volunteer attorney then provides legal assistance in the areas of public benefits, housing, health benefits access, and discrimination. The program specialist also educates HIV-related service providers about HALSA's services so they can convey this information to their clients.

Harriett Buhai Center for Family Law. The *Domestic Violence Law Project* provides comprehensive legal assistance to victims of domestic violence in Los Angeles County, through both staff and volunteers. Clients are given legal advice, assistance with representing themselves, and legal representation directed at prevention and cessation of abuse, creation of parental plans for custody and visitation, and establishment of support orders. Referrals are made to a variety of partners, including legal aid providers that assist with Violence Against Women Act petitions that help a domestic violence victim leave her abuser.

Homebase/The Center for Common Concerns. The *Responding to the Legal Needs of Chronically Homeless People in Securing Housing Project* works to increase appropriate housing for chronically homeless people throughout California. It compiles and disseminates data about best practice housing models, develops issues briefs on homelessness, and presents that information to members of the California Legislature and administration. The project also provides trainings on homelessness to key stakeholders and decision makers, educates chronically homeless persons about their rights and available services, and provides in-depth assistance, including legal and policy advice, to communities that are developing housing projects for the chronically homeless.

Immigrant Legal Resource Center. The *Assisting Immigrant Clients' Advocates Project* assists legal aid providers who represent clients in immigration cases statewide. The project develops accurate, understandable legal materials covering a wide range of immigration areas that help legal aid attorneys and advocates who do not specialize in immigration law. The project also trains legal services providers on immigration options available to abused immigrants and facilitates communication that assists with cases under the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act, a statute that gives immigration options to individuals from Guatemala, El Salvador, and some Eastern European countries.

Inland Counties Legal Services. The *Client Services Center* provides legal assistance in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties to tenants, consumers, and individuals with family law problems, primarily through a telephone hotline, with follow-up assistance and representation where appropriate. Videoconferencing technology is being developed for centralized screening of emergency walk-in cases in branch offices. The center holds eviction defense housing clinics at five branch offices, conducts a tenant/landlord project at the Riverside Civil Court five afternoons a week, and develops and distributes landlord/tenant educational materials, all to assist clients in keeping their housing.

Inland Counties Legal Services. The *Domestic Violence Advocacy Project* targets services to victims of domestic violence in San Bernardino County who are traditionally underserved, including immigrant women, teens in the High Desert, ethnic minority elderly individuals, as well as victims who are deaf or hearing impaired. Project attorneys provide counsel and advice, brief services, and extended representation on issues such as paternity, child custody and visitation, restraining orders, child support, evictions involving the police, and immigration self-petitions.

Inland Empire Latino Lawyers Association. The goal of the *One Step Further Teen Parent Project* in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties is to educate and empower minor parents to establish parental relationships with their children and terminate any abusive relationships with other adults. The project educates teen mothers and fathers about their right to establish custody; provides one-on-one sessions with a staff attorney to discuss the teen parent's specific legal needs; prepares legal documents needed for legal custody, visitation, child support, and protective orders; and offers courtroom representation for the teen parent.

Inner City Law Center. The *Slum Housing Abatement Project* takes a multipronged approach to dealing with the problem of slum housing in the inner city communities of Los Angeles. Many

of the project's clients are immigrants with children. The project first attempts to obtain voluntary compliance from landlords to bring housing up to code. The project also works with regulatory agencies entrusted with enforcing the various housing and health codes. If voluntary compliance and regulatory pressure are insufficient, the project files suit on behalf of its clients, seeking compensation for the tenants' injuries and subjection to uninhabitable conditions.

La Raza Centro Legal. The *Immigrant Outreach Project* gives immigrants in the San Francisco Bay Area information about their legal rights, making them better able to protect themselves from unfair or unlawful proceedings. Materials are regularly updated to ensure they contain the most accurate and up-to-date information. Populations served by the project are low-income immigrants, primarily monolingual Spanish speakers, who are day laborers, domestic workers, restaurant workers, janitorial workers, senior citizens, or persons with disabilities.

Law Center for Families. The *Domestic Abuse Prevention Project* in Alameda County provides advice, brief service, and legal representation on family law issues and other legal issues related to domestic violence. Assistance with restraining orders, custody and visitation orders, child and spousal support, and property division help achieve physical safety and stability and reduce the risks of homelessness and financial dependence. The project also conducts community outreach and education, particularly to immigrant women, and works in collaboration with other organizations that provide services needed by victims of domestic violence to ensure their transition to a nonviolent life.

Law Foundation of Silicon Valley. The goal of the *AIDS Legal Services Project* in Santa Clara County is to provide individuals living with HIV and AIDS with the legal assistance necessary to alleviate stressful and complicated legal situations so their health conditions will remain stabilized. The project provides assistance in the areas of housing and employment rights, estate planning, debt relief, public and private health and financial benefits, and confidentiality protections. The project attorney also conducts community outreach and education aimed at minorities within the HIV/AIDS community, to help them protect their legal rights.

Law Foundation of Silicon Valley. The *Fair Housing Law Project* provides free legal representation to individuals who have experienced housing discrimination based on race, national origin, religion, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, the presence of children, age, disability, source of income, or another arbitrary characteristic. The project recently spearheaded the Fair Mortgage Terms Initiative, an anti-predatory lending collaborative of more than 20 government and private agencies, because many seniors and non-English speakers have been the victims of predatory home loans, losing their home equity or the home itself to unethical mortgage brokers. The project also conducts extensive outreach to residents, landlords, and social services agencies to educate them about illegal and unfair housing and lending practices.

Law Foundation of Silicon Valley. The *Guardianship Project* provides direct legal representation to children who need guardianships in order to remain in a stable, court-sanctioned placement without fear of being removed by an unstable parent. The project social worker determines whether a guardianship will serve a child's best interest; if so, a project or volunteer attorney provides the representation so that the guardian is legally entitled to seek

benefits and protections for the child. This project is part of Legal Advocates for Children and Youth at the law foundation

Law Foundation of Silicon Valley. The *Housing Rights Project* provides outreach and legal services to individuals with mental health or developmental disabilities. A project attorney assists with fair housing rights, evictions, habitability problems, landlord/tenant conflicts, and abuse and neglect in residential care. Racial and ethnic minorities are specifically sought out; for example, community education is offered to all Vietnamese-speaking welfare-to-work participants through the Santa Clara County Housing Authority. This work is part of the Mental Health Advocacy Project at the foundation.

Law Foundation of Silicon Valley. The *Anti-Slumlord Campaign* of the foundation's Public Interest Law Firm provides legal representation for groups of tenants who have experienced systematic habitability problems in rental property. The majority of tenants represented are members of racial and ethnic minorities. Project staff performs the investigation through photographs, public records review, and client and witness interviews. Volunteer attorneys then provide representation in seeking to abate the substandard conditions.

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. The *Human Trafficking Project* advocates for the rights of trafficking victims through direct service, education, outreach and policy work. These are individuals brought to the United States and forced to work in industries such as the garment, domestic service, agricultural, and commercial sex industries who are subject to abuses and forced into servitude through debt bondage, threats of deportation, and sometimes torture and imprisonment. The project brings employment law cases and assists the victims with immigration relief and social services available under federal law. Realizing that there is a severe lack of public awareness about human trafficking, the project also engages in extensive outreach and educational efforts to government and nongovernment agencies to help them identify and assist victims.

Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area. The *Voting Rights Project* monitors elections to elected entities—such as city councils, school boards, and water districts—to identify election systems that abridge or dilute the voting rights of protected classes of voters. Under California law, if minority voters can show that an at-large election system causes wholesale disenfranchisement of particular residents, they can secure a shift from the at-large system to district representative systems (which tend to be more representative of minority voting interests). These cases seek to improve the currently disproportionately low representation of racial and ethnic voters in California.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The *Smart Growth Through Affordable Housing Project* provides legal representation to community-based and nonprofit developers in Los Angeles County who will build affordable housing and other needed community facilities such as youth centers, transitional homeless shelters, and community technology centers in urban areas. This development provides needed housing and services for low-income inner-city dwellers, who can then take advantage of existing infrastructure and proximity to jobs, child care, and public transportation. Project staff provides individualized legal and technical assistance often on a “project counsel” basis. Such legal assistance includes drafting, review, and negotiation of

development team agreements; drafting, reviewing, and negotiating purchase and sale agreements; reviewing and negotiating limited partnership agreements with tax credit investors; drafting general contractors' contracts or bid documents; assisting with preparing applications for funding and property tax exemptions; and offering counsel and advice on various legal issues that arise through the development process.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The *Removing Barriers to Employment Project* is designed to remove a major legal barrier—the lack of a valid driver's license—to getting a job that leads to self-sufficiency employment. The project provides self-help driver's license clinics at community-based job placement and/or job training centers, including those located in public subsidized housing. Clinic participants hear a general information presentation and receive a project-developed self-help manual, with appropriate supplementary materials, including court forms. Volunteer attorneys then provide individual counsel and advice to the participants.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The goal of the *Housing Improvement Project* is to improve and increase affordable housing stock in Los Angeles through outreach, litigation, and policy advocacy. The project formed the Slum-Free Zone Alliance, which includes a variety of housing and health care groups and brings in significant resources from private attorneys—including some from three law firms engaged in slum litigation. This team of experienced litigators works with the Healthy Homes Collaborative to bring litigation when other advocacy strategies fail to achieve the goal of decent, safe, and sanitary housing. The alliance is focusing on one block at a time in the most dilapidated parts of the city.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The *Homeless Veterans Project* in Los Angeles helps homeless veterans get off the street and into decent housing and have a livable income, whether from obtaining Veterans Administration benefits or employment. The project assists veterans in filing for VA benefits and makes sure that homeless veterans' claims are expedited as required by law. It also seeks to change confusing agency policies that can result in disqualifying a veteran from filing a VA claim. In addition, the project assists veterans to open electronic transfer accounts so they do not have to walk around the dangerous skid row area with a month's worth of cash, and it helps them find housing and jobs and, if needed, get into recovery programs.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The *Consumer Law Project* is designed to protect low-income consumers from the loss of income, their home, and other assets due to unfair debt collection practices, identity theft, predatory loans, and payday loans. Project staff conducts outreach and education within the community where likely victims can be found, such as senior centers, churches, and community fairs. Individuals who have already been victimized receive assistance or representation. Debt crisis clinics for bankruptcy counseling and representation are also held. Additionally, the project is designed to remove barriers to employment by correcting erroneous credit reports and expunging misdemeanor records. This enables clients to obtain jobs or job training, which leads to self-sufficiency.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The *Domestic Violence Prevention Project* provides assistance to domestic violence victims with obtaining restraining orders and custody orders. The assistance is provided at the Long Beach courthouse on a walk-in basis with priority given to

emergency cases. Project staff and a volunteer attorney explain the family court process, prepare all the necessary paperwork, and review the file if problems occur. An advocate from the local shelter assists the clients with safety planning and referrals for counseling and shelter.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The *Southeast Asian Community Project* provides outreach to Asian and Pacific Islander (API) individuals in some of the most isolated and hard-to-reach communities concentrated in the Long Beach and South Bay areas. The Cambodian community is a particular focus because of its high poverty rate (46 percent), illiteracy rate (45 percent), and English nonproficiency rate (72 percent). The project helps to better understand the legal needs of the API communities, establishes and nurtures relationships with community groups, makes presentations about legal issues to client groups, staffs legal clinics located at local community organizations and the courthouse, and works on cases in a culturally sensitive manner.

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles. The *Long Beach Eviction Defense Project* provides assistance to low-income renters facing eviction. Assistance includes preparing claims for individuals who will represent themselves and assisting others through legal representation in court, as well as training community groups in how to assist tenants with self-representation. With this assistance, low-income tenants with meritorious claims that their housing is not habitable can maintain their residences while compelling landlords to correct housing conditions. Others can be helped to resolve their disputes or negotiate for additional time to move and sometimes find relocation assistance. Because there are so few options for replacement housing when they are turned out of their units, eviction becomes the gateway to homelessness for many low-income tenants. This project helps to close that gateway.

Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara. The *Subsidized Housing Tenant Protection and Eviction Defense Project* seeks to prevent the loss of housing for low-income tenants. Project attorneys and paralegals provide legal counseling, assistance to those who represent themselves, and attorney representation in evictions from public housing and at informal conferences and hearings where vouchers that subsidize housing costs are at risk of termination. The project also monitors changes in subsidized housing made by the local housing authority, and advocates on behalf of tenants when the changes are potentially illegal.

Legal Aid of the North Bay. The *Countywide Outreach Clinics for Marin Project* provides access to legal services in five locations away from the main office. Most of the locations are designed to reach senior citizens and Hispanic immigrants, and much of the assistance is given by volunteer attorneys. The clinics include Seniors Against Investment Fraud seminars because an alarming number of seniors are victims of or at risk for investment fraud, particularly low-income seniors and those with limited resources.

Legal Aid of the North Bay. The goal of the *Outreach for Napa Project* is to help low-income individuals in Napa County who are unable to travel to access legal services. A part-time attorney provides assistance to the elderly, immigrants, and those with limited English proficiency.

Legal Aid Society—Employment Law Center. An *Employment Law Paralegal* helps support claims of clients who have suffered employment discrimination or other employment wrongs in complex cases brought to improve the working conditions and employment opportunities of Californians with low income or limited English proficiency. The paralegal organizes and records large productions of documents, develops databases for evidence, and prepares for trial. These activities are essential in ensuring that evidence is recorded and documented for review by the courts.

Legal Aid Society—Employment Law Center. A *Language Coordinator* helps to ensure that monolingual workers receive linguistically accessible legal services in the Bay Area. The coordinator recruits and manages volunteer translators and interpreters. This is essential to all aspects of the organization's work, from obtaining the translation of fact sheets to interpreting for monolingual clients in litigation. In addition, the coordinator provides translation and interpretation services in Mandarin and Cantonese and has helped to increase the numbers of Chinese-speaking clients served.

Legal Aid Society—Employment Law Center. A grant-funded staff attorney oversees the *Unemployment and Wage Claims Project* and helps meet the needs of a growing population of low-wage workers who have been harmed by increases in layoffs and terminations or who have moved off the welfare rolls and taken low-wage work. The claims project provides assistance to individuals who have been denied wages or unemployment insurance. The staff attorney supervises law students who volunteer at workers' rights clinics and provide advice, brief service, and direct representation in administrative proceedings. The staff attorney also develops self-help materials for claimants that the project is unable to represent.

Legal Aid Society—Employment Law Center. An attorney for the *Educational Access for Disabled Students Project* helps ensure that disabled students in California have equal access to educational opportunities. Because of architectural and programmatic barriers, children and young adults with disabilities are unable to participate in many of the programs, services, and activities that are offered to students without disabilities, severely compromising their ability to use their education to become participants in the workforce. The program assists in creating broad-based partnerships with community and advocacy groups to advance the educational rights of disabled students under state and federal law. Through written materials, community outreach, "know your rights" trainings, and referrals to public and private attorneys, the program empowers disabled students and their parents to work together to compel educational institutions to comply with relevant laws.

Legal Aid Society of Orange County. The goal of the *Health Consumer Action Center* is to assist low-income underrepresented consumers in accessing the health care system in Orange County and southeastern areas of Los Angeles County. The project provides community education to consumers, staff of community organizations, and health care providers about how to access health care coverage and about consumers' health care rights. It helps consumers navigate the health care system to obtain the coverage and medical benefits they are entitled to receive, and works with health care agencies and collaborative partners to develop policies that ensure meaningful and effective health care access.

Legal Aid Society of Orange County. The *Homeless Legal Outreach and Assistance Program* is a collaboration with the Public Law Center and several Orange County homeless shelters. The program provides comprehensive legal services to homeless clients who are receiving transitional housing and supportive services. Most of the clients are victims of domestic violence, seniors, and families with substance abuse problems. This approach that provides a full range of supportive services, including legal services, can be the bridge that moves homeless individuals and families to self-sufficiency.

Legal Aid Society of Orange County. The *Community Education and Outreach Services Project* produces materials both to increase public awareness of legal aid programs and to educate the client community in Orange County and southeastern areas of Los Angeles County. The project utilizes media such as TV, radio, the Web, newspapers, and other printed materials to distribute legal information. In addition, training materials are developed for community organizations and agency staff to teach them to prevent, recognize, and resolve clients' legal problems. The project also has been instrumental in the ongoing design improvements of a computerized client assistance system called I-CAN! (Interactive Community Education Network), by producing national public service announcements and the on-screen video guide that verbally leads clients through the process of creating pro per pleadings online. Court staff report increased accuracy and better informed self-represented litigants among the I-CAN! users.

Legal Aid Society of Orange County. The *Asian Language Legal Access Project* is a consortium of four legal aid providers in Orange and Los Angeles Counties that work together to expand the availability of legal services to the indigent within the Asian and Pacific Islander (API) communities, by reducing the language and cultural barriers that prevent many API individuals from accessing legal services. A centralized telephone hotline and intake system utilizes a specialized "800" number for each Asian language, and calls are answered by bilingual advocates who immediately screen clients for eligibility, provide initial consultation, gather basic information, and transfer those needing on-going assistance to the appropriate provider. All of the legal aid providers in the project are connected technologically so a caller is transferred directly to the collaborative member best able to provide the additional legal assistance needed. As part of the broader effort, specific improvements in access for Vietnamese clients have been made at the Legal Aid Society of Orange County, including direct access to a Vietnamese speaker, new outreach flyers in Vietnamese, revisions in the Vietnamese I-CAN! computer modules, and the addition of a Vietnamese attorney who works at legal clinics on health care access and taxpayer issues.

Legal Aid Society of Orange County. The *Domestic Violence Prevention Program* provides trained legal personnel to assist victims of domestic violence in getting restraining orders. The program operates in the Compton and Norwalk courthouses. Program staff and volunteers help to prepare applications for orders and related documents. They also advise clients regarding court and law enforcement procedures and prepare protective orders following court hearings. Clients are referred to the local legal aid office for additional legal assistance in appropriate situations and to other agencies for housing, counseling, and other support services. The program gives victims of domestic violence the assistance necessary to help them remove themselves from abusive situations and begin to create a sense of personal well-being, safety, and self-sufficiency.

Legal Aid Society of Orange County. The *Evening Hotline Project* allows the Legal Aid Society's telephone hotline to be open in the evening to more effectively serve the working poor and reduce the wait for callers to speak to an intake worker. Callers receive advice and counsel and referrals to appropriate agencies. Clients needing clinic or in-depth legal services are scheduled for an office or clinic appointment. Law students from across the country perform internships for law school credit or volunteer their time to answer hotline calls and assist clients with cases under the supervision of staff attorneys.

Legal Aid Society of San Bernardino. The *Unlawful Detainer—Residential Law Project* assists tenants in community locations in Barstow, Victorville, and Chino. Renters facing eviction are given consultation and advice, documentation preparation, procedural instructions, and direct representation when the client's claims involve uninhabitable premises, retaliatory litigation, or lack of due process. The project, which brings legal services to the more remote areas of San Bernardino County, makes a particular impact on the elderly, persons with disabilities, young single parents, and native Spanish speakers.

Legal Aid Society of San Bernardino. The *Seniors' Project* provides legal assistance to elderly individuals at the senior center in Chino once a month. A project or volunteer attorney provides consultations and brief service, primarily regarding evictions, bankruptcy, creditor/debtor issues, durable powers of attorney, wills, and living trusts. The provision of these services in the West End gives access to legal services that many senior citizens otherwise would not have because of their inability to travel.

Legal Aid Society of San Diego. The *Community Response Team* staffs a full-time hotline service for low-income residents throughout San Diego County. Intake specialists screen calls for subject matter, income and geographic eligibility, and then refer callers to a team of attorney-supervised paralegals who provide timely, specific, problem-solving advice and brief service to hundreds of callers each month. Most calls involve family law, housing CalWORKs, or various urgent legal issues. For callers who need more extended service or whose problems are more complex, the intake specialist or paralegal can refer the call directly to an attorney experienced in the relevant legal issues. The hotline incorporates customer-focused attributes such as automatic call-back and call-queuing with wait-time announcements to improve call retention and minimize hang-ups. The project extends the program's capacity to reach the most isolated and poorest residents of this large county, while at the same time enhancing the ability of program advocates and attorneys to provide more and higher-quality services by relieving them of intake and screening concerns and allowing them to focus on substantive problems and solutions.

Legal Aid Society of San Mateo County. The *First Five Years Project* focuses on the legal, social, and health problems of low-income children aged five and under. The screening process identifies at-risk children, including those with disabilities, with inadequate health care or unmet health needs, and with teenage parents, as well as those who witness domestic violence. The project offers advice, counsel, and representation on these and other legal issues impacting family life. Volunteer attorneys often give the assistance, particularly in guardianship cases. Referrals are made to other collaborative organizations to help families build a network of support for themselves and their children.

Legal Assistance for Seniors. The *Elder Abuse Prevention: Legal Protection and Response Project* provides a continuum of legal services for victims of elder abuse in Alameda County. Using a community education strategy, information is presented to seniors, family members, service providers, and others about risk factors, prevention measures, remedies, and required reporting. The presentations are given at senior citizen facilities, senior fairs, health fairs, and faith-based organizations. The project also provides individual legal assistance for clients experiencing physical, emotional, and/or financial abuse. Such assistance includes obtaining temporary restraining orders for clients suffering physical abuse or neglect, executing durable powers of attorney for clients to protect assets such as bank accounts, and providing basic estate planning.

Legal Assistance to the Elderly. The *Expedited Intake Project* is designed to provide elderly San Franciscans with easy access to a knowledgeable individual who can quickly evaluate a problem, make an appropriate referral to a social service provider or government agency, or refer the matter to a member of the legal staff, to another legal aid provider, or to the private bar. The project has resulted in quicker intake and services for clients and an increase in the number of elderly receiving service. Priority assistance is given in the areas of housing, health care, income maintenance, and physical and financial abuse.

Legal Center for the Elderly and Disabled. The *Elder Abuse Prevention and Redress Project*, operating in Sacramento, San Joaquin, El Dorado, and Placer Counties, is for homebound and/or severely disabled individuals and isolated seniors at risk of unnecessary institutionalization or exploitation who need legal assistance and counseling to safely live independently in their own homes. The project's emphasis is on "planning for incapacity," which enables elderly, disabled individuals to make decisions about where and how they want to live for the remainder of their lives, while they are still mentally alert. Alternatives to conservatorship, such as durable powers of attorney, are explored with clients. The project also provides representation of elderly and/or disabled victims of financial exploitation.

Legal Services for Children. The goal of the *Young Women Empowerment Project* is to advocate for greater safety, stability, and permanency for at-risk adolescent girls in San Francisco, in order to ultimately prevent their involvement with the juvenile justice system. Legal advice and representation is provided to pregnant and parenting teens regarding domestic violence situations, paternity/child support, and child custody proceedings, and to address legal barriers to appropriate education and physical and mental health care. Assistance with guardianship, foster care, and emancipation helps to ensure safe housing and permanence. Outreach to the clients through existing providers of social services for at-risk girls is a major component of the project.

Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. The goal of the *Prisoners and Family Justice Project* is to assist legal aid providers statewide in serving prisoners with children with civil legal problems such as child care and custody, visitation, other family matters, and immigration. The project develops manuals and other material to educate prisoners, their families, and legal aid providers. The project recently updated the *Family Advocacy Manual*, which helps family members advocate for themselves on issues such as medical care, compassionate release, transfers, emergency leave, and re-entry. They also train individuals on conviction expungement

for adults and juveniles, providing critical information for individuals who want to prevent or preclude discrimination against ex-offenders, particularly in finding employment.

Legal Services for Seniors. The *Homebound/Outreach Legal Project* provides access to legal services for the elderly in Monterey County who have physical health or transportation difficulties. The project attorney offers workshops and presentations and sees individual elderly clients by appointment at various senior nutrition sites, in low-income housing facilities, and at other senior organizations. The attorney also visits homebound clients in their homes or care facilities. Clients receive advice and brief service on legal issues involving housing, consumer fraud, debt collection, health care, and estate planning.

Legal Services of Northern California. The *Affordable Housing Creation and Preservation Project* works to create and retain affordable housing for low-income individuals in 23 Northern California counties. A regional counsel ensures that project staff properly monitors jurisdictions' compliance with state law requirements, particularly their obligation to plan for sufficient housing for all income levels. This work is done jurisdiction by jurisdiction, in collaboration with community groups who advocate on behalf of low-income residents in each county. The project also monitors property owners' compliance with laws regarding the preservation of existing housing, particularly federally subsidized housing, and with fair housing, code enforcement, and other housing laws. The goal is to preserve as many affordable units as possible, with a secondary goal of obtaining benefits or other alternatives for clients when preservation is not possible. The project uses a combination of advocacy strategies, including litigation.

Legal Services of Northern California. The *Welfare and Public Assistance Project* serves clients throughout California's 23 most northern counties who are eligible for CalWORKs and other state-administered public assistance, such as Food Stamps and Medi-Cal. Specifically targeted are isolated, ethnic, non-English-speaking communities and families with disabilities. Many families are terminated from cash benefits because of alleged "procedural noncompliance," much of which can be prevented by education and/or advocacy. Other families are wrongly sanctioned off of cash benefits and do not receive the child care, transportation, education, and other supportive services to which they are entitled to help them obtain and keep employment. The project works with community groups to educate them and their members and staffs about the legal rights regarding public assistance, and it provides legal assistance to families affected by these problems.

Legal Services of Northern California. The *Community Economic Development Project* has four initiatives that work with community groups, who take the lead, with project staff providing the legal expertise. The Home Ownership Initiative works with low-income families and community groups to expand home ownership opportunities. Much of this work involves assistance with securing properly zoned and entitled land upon which to build. The Capital Accumulation Initiative works to increase low-income families' and neighborhood assets by using strategies such as Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), and lending circles. The Jobs and Child Care Initiative employs a variety of strategies, including assisting community groups in creating child care programs and negotiating new job agreements. The Housing for Special Needs Populations Initiative works to create housing with supportive services for disabled and homeless individuals and families, children aging out of

foster care, migrant farm workers, and isolated ethnic groups by providing assistance in the acquisition, financing, entitlement, and development of housing projects to meet their needs.

Los Angeles Center for Law and Justice. The *Roybal Clinic Satellite Office* serves the low-income, elderly, and disabled residents of Los Angeles County's southeastern cities. The area has a disproportionately high poverty rate and a population that is primarily Latino and Spanish-speaking. The satellite office provides legal advice, counsel, and representation in the areas of family law, consumer law, housing, immigration, and government benefits. Staff of the office also gives regular community outreach presentations in English and Spanish so residents can learn about their legal rights and the legal resources available to them.

Los Angeles County Bar Association. The *Pro Bono Representation Panel* provides legal advice and consultation for non-English-speaking immigrants at initial hearings before the immigration court. Volunteer attorneys go to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (formerly the INS) courtrooms where respondents are told they can meet with an attorney. After meeting, the volunteer attorney attends the hearing with the respondent. The panel also provides respondents with materials outlining their potential access to experienced immigration attorneys through the lawyer referral service of the Los Angeles County Bar Association and the Mexican American Bar Association.

McGeorge School of Law Community Legal Services. The *Immigration Clinic* provides assistance on immigration matters to low-income individuals in Sacramento County. Law students who are supervised by a clinic faculty member and a private attorney who specializes in immigration law provide legal advice, form preparation, brief service, and direct representation to immigrants. Clients are assisted with applications for citizenship, family-sponsored petitions, self-petitions under the Violence Against Women Act, and other immigrant petitions. The clinic also conducts community outreach to a variety of community groups and government agencies seeking information about immigration law and immigrant rights. Additional benefits of the clinic's work include providing experience for law students who may want to practice in the area of immigration law and helping the students recognize the on-going need to volunteer to provide free assistance to low-income clients.

Mental Health Advocacy Services. The *Juvenile Hall Advocacy Clinic*, a collaboration between Mental Health Advocacy Services, Public Counsel, and Whittier Law School, addresses the needs of minors being detained in three juvenile halls in Los Angeles by advocating for improved treatment and conditions at the facilities. The clients are children with serious mental and/or developmental disabilities. Project attorneys, along with volunteer law students, visit the facilities once or twice a week to meet with the juvenile detainees and provide legal assistance to resolve grievances related to their treatment, violation of rights, and conditions in the facilities. For relatively minor issues, project staff immediately contacts facility staff to resolve the issues. Other problems require more assistance or representation. For example, if a child is being denied mental health treatment, the project negotiates with the departments of probation and mental health to ensure that children are assessed and provided the mental health service they need. In addition to individual advocacy, project staff meets regularly with probation department officials to address systemic issues.

Mexican American Legal Defense & Education Fund. The *Developing California Voting Rights Act Through Cases Project* seeks to assist legal aid providers in California to file cases under the California Voting Rights Act. This act permits minority voters to challenge at-large elections systems for such bodies as city councils, school boards, water boards, and other special district boards. At-large systems can prevent minority communities from attaining representation commensurate with their size. The project is setting precedent and developing guidelines that make it easier for legal aid programs to file cases under the new act.

National Center for Youth Law. The *Juvenile Mental Health Court Project* organizes and trains legal aid advocates and volunteer lawyers who assist youth involved in the Santa Clara Juvenile Mental Health Court and their families. Court personnel make referrals of low-income youth whose delinquent behavior stems from unmet mental health needs to the advocates and volunteer attorneys. The advocates and attorneys then assist the youth to enroll in public benefits programs, particularly those that provide long-term mental health care so they receive help and do not re-enter the juvenile justice system.

National Center for Youth Law. The *California Child Support Project* works to improve the child support system in California so more low-income single parents receive this critical source of financial stability. The project provides materials with step-by-step instructions to low-income parents and provides trainings to legal aid and volunteer attorneys so they can assist clients with the application for and enforcement of child support orders. In addition, the project comments on draft regulations and policies that are implementing the reforms and meets monthly with state officials to discuss issues of mutual concern.

National Economic Development & Law Center. The *On-Site Assistance Project* provides specifically tailored on-site assistance to legal aid programs active in community economic development (CED) in California. The assistance includes CED training for staff, client organizations, and volunteer attorneys on local economic development needs; discussions of current CED issues; discussions of the legal aid providers' current and future CED plans, priorities, and management; and other CED assistance as requested. The project and the legal aid provider then prepare a follow-up plan with the actions to be taken by each as a result of the on-site assistance, and they monitor their increased effectiveness in CED efforts.

National Health Law Program. The *Medi-Cal Training* provides basic training about Medi-Cal to legal aid advocates in California. The targeted audience includes new advocates who are unaware of Medi-Cal eligibility and services and more experienced attorneys who need updates on the rapidly changing Medi-Cal program. Trained advocates are equipped to better advise low-income individuals with health care needs and Medi-Cal issues.

National Health Law Program. The *Issue Brief* is a publication that keeps California legal aid advocates informed of developments in California's Medicaid waiver process. Changes in Medi-Cal affect low-income individuals' ability to access health care and what benefits will be covered. The *Issue Brief* gives advocates information necessary for them to properly advise their clients in need of health care.

National Housing Law Project. The goal of the *Public Housing Plan and Self-Sufficiency Project* is to assist California legal aid advocates to change local public housing authority (PHA) plans to improve residents' opportunities and rights under various PHA policies and programs, particularly the family self-sufficiency programs. The project develops and distributes model comments that are used by advocates to comment on PHA plans to comply with federal training, contracting, employment, self-sufficiency, and community service program requirements. The project also provides training sessions on PHA obligations to employ low-income public housing residents. In addition, it provides technical assistance to legal aid providers involved in the PHA plan processes in their areas, helping them to ensure that PHAs maximize opportunities to increase the self-sufficiency of their residents.

National Housing Law Project. The *Predatory Lending Initiative* conducts a series of training events in Northern and Southern California that provide assistance to legal aid advocates on predatory lending issues. They also suggest methods by which to challenge predatory lending through direct individual representation and the marshaling of local legal and nonlegal resources. The initiative provides individual technical assistance to legal aid advocates representing victims of predatory lending, most of whom are persons of color and/or elderly. The initiative's goal is to reduce the number of families who lose their homes as a result of predatory lending practices in California.

National Immigration Law Center. The *Project to Expand Legal Representation of Immigrants With Emphasis on Needs of Low-Wage Immigrant Workers* provides trainings and materials to California legal aid advocates on immigrant employment issues, particularly on the special problems encountered by immigrants in bring claims for violations of minimum wage, employment discrimination, and health and safety laws. The project also provides technical assistance about the Legal Services Corporation's regulation regarding representation of immigrants by legal services programs funded by LSC. Although the regulation allows representation of immigrants under certain circumstances, it is confusing and can result in legal services programs not representing eligible immigrants.

National Senior Citizens Law Center. The *Public Benefits and the "Fugitive" Penalty Project* was designed to provide training, technical assistance, and informational materials to legal aid advocates and volunteer attorneys about an eligibility issue called the "fugitive" penalty, under which individuals are found to be "fleeing" and thus ineligible for benefits even though they had no intent to flee and may have been unaware of any criminal charges. The project assists advocates and attorneys in California to recognize the problem and devise strategies for effective representation.

National Senior Citizens Law Center. The *Immigrant Benefits Access Project* was designed to provide technical assistance to legal aid advocates on immigrant eligibility and language access issues that arise in Supplemental Security Income, Social Security, Medicare, and the Cash Assistance Program for Immigrants. Language access problems are especially severe for individuals of an advanced age who have much greater difficulty learning a new language. Better implementation of the Social Security Administration's interpreter policy and written notices in more languages are two goals of the project's policy advocacy.

Neighborhood Legal Services. The *Asian Pacific Islander Advocacy Project* employs multiple strategies to improve low-income Asian Pacific Islander (API) communities' access to and use of legal aid resources and services in northern and eastern Los Angeles County. The project is increasing the availability of legal aid staff who are bilingual in API languages and who are sensitive to API community ethnic and cultural issues. The project also has a special API advocacy group that is the primary intake mechanism for API clients, handles the cases of API clients, and engages in extensive community education and outreach in low-income API communities in the San Gabriel Valley in collaboration with other community-based organizations and elected officials. In addition, the project continues its leadership role in the Asian Language Legal Intake Project in collaboration with three other legal aid providers.

Neighborhood Legal Services. The *Workers' Rights Project* seeks to increase low-income workers' knowledge of their legal rights as employees and to expand the availability of legal advice and representation to protect their rights. The project targets low-income workers from the Asian Pacific Islander and Latino immigrant communities centered in the San Gabriel, San Fernando, and Pomona Valleys in Los Angeles County. Two workers' rights clinics provide information on legal rights and self-help assistance and screen for possible representation. The clinics are bilingual in English/Spanish, English/Mandarin, and English/other API languages. Outreach is conducted in immigrant communities to increase awareness of employment rights and the availability of the workers' rights clinics. The project also provides direct representation and policy advocacy to change laws and policies to better protect the legal rights of low-income workers and their families.

Neighborhood Legal Services. The *Self-Help Advocacy Project*, through its new director of self-help advocacy, works to improve low-income communities' ability to effectively use the justice system without assistance in northern and eastern Los Angeles County. The project ensures the effective and efficient operation of the program's court-based self-help centers by standardizing services, forms, and materials; training staff; overseeing volunteer recruitment; and coordinating with the courts. The project also conducts training for the courts, the local bar, community-based organizations and agencies, and the public on the value of self-help assistance.

Prison Law Office. The *Health Care Project* works on behalf of California prisoners to ensure they have minimally adequate dental care. Through a settlement in a class action about the prisons' medical care delivery system, the project makes 40 monitoring visits per year to investigate compliance. Although the settlement did not include dental care, the project is allowed to interview prison dental staff during the visits. Through these interviews and letters from prisoners who have received notice about their health and dental care rights, the project is investigating whether the dental care in the prisons meets the Eighth Amendment guarantee of access to a minimally adequate medical care system. Dental records, gathered from prisoners who write the project, will be given to an expert to determine the quality of individual care.

Prison Law Office. The *Self-Help Project* provides materials to California prisoners that the Prison Law Office is unable to represent. Thousands of prisoners request assistance from the project each year. A response is sent to each prisoner with relevant self-help materials, including pamphlets and form letters. These self-help materials, on a variety of topics, are developed and updated by the project.

Pro Bono Project of Silicon Valley. The *ACCESS Project* provides specialized services for clients who have difficulty working with volunteer attorneys and/or the court system because of personality, disability, culture, and/or language. Project staff works closely with these clients so volunteer attorneys will take their cases and not have inordinate time demands put on them. Specialized services performed by the staff include being the primary contact for communication, finding client papers needed for the case, securing interpretation and translation, and other case management services needed to assist clients who have barriers to making the best use of legal assistance provided by volunteer attorneys.

Protection & Advocacy. The *Southern California Children and Young Adult Initiative* provides advocacy regarding special education, regional center, and Medi-Cal mental health services to children and young adults with disabilities who are in or have left the dependency, delinquency, or special education systems. The initiative focuses particularly on children and youth who are non-English speaking and come from underrepresented communities. The initiative provides a greater advocacy presence at Metropolitan State Hospital and other residential facilities in Southern California, so that fewer children and young adults are placed or remain in such restrictive settings.

Protection & Advocacy. The *Advocacy Services Project for Californians with Disabilities from Language and Ethnically Distinct Communities* provides information and training statewide to targeted individuals about services that are available to assist them. The project also translates self-help and other disability rights educational materials into the targeted languages, including Spanish, Mixteco, Hmong, and Chinese. Mixteco and Hmong materials are also audio taped to ensure greater access, as many individuals do not read Hmong and Mixteco. Direct representation focuses on remedying systemic barriers facing specific underserved communities such as access to special education services and assistive technology; language access for individuals with sensory disabilities (deaf, blind); and language access in schools, hospitals, and other public agencies.

Protection & Advocacy. The *Investigation of Abuse and Neglect Project* investigates allegations of abuse and neglect of persons with disabilities in California, including those residing in state institutions, skilled nursing facilities, and community care facilities. Investigations are initiated when the project receives a complaint or determines that probable cause exists to believe that abuse or neglect has occurred and there appears to be a practice that requires a more systemic evaluation. Priorities for this year have included an investigation into a series of genital lacerations in a state developmental center and investigating deaths or serious injuries proximately related to the use of behavioral restraints and/or seclusion. Policy work continues on banning the use of dangerous prone restraints.

Protection & Advocacy. The *Access to Health Care, Financial Entitlement, and Other Benefits Project* assists individuals with learning, sensory, and physical disabilities to obtain access to health care and financial and other benefits that enable them to live in the community. It enforces the rights of these individuals to self-determination in health care decisions, personal relationships including parenting, and privacy. The project, for individuals in the 39 counties served from an office in Sacramento, provides information, short-term assistance, and direct

representation. The project's advocate also conducts trainings at independent living centers and multipurpose senior services programs to increase the ability of individuals to advocate for themselves.

Protection & Advocacy. The purpose of the *Community Integration of Individuals with Disabilities Project* is to increase community living options for persons with disabilities, including access to services, supports, and homes in the community. Project strategies include representation of nursing home residents who need assessment for services they require to live in the community; administrative advocacy to ensure that the state implements the U.S. Supreme Court-mandated plan to ensure that no disabled individual who could live in the community remains in an institution; and policy advocacy to increase access to homes, services, and supports in the community for disabled individuals. All services are provided as co-counsel with legal aid providers and volunteer attorneys or in collaboration with disability organizations and consumers.

Public Advocates. The *Housing Project* seeks to improve affordable housing opportunities for households with low and very low incomes in the San Francisco Bay Area. The project provides legal assistance to community housing advocacy groups who are working with their local jurisdictions to develop and implement effective five-year affordable housing plans required by federal law. The assistance, which is tailored to local groups, includes drafting comments, negotiating with local planners and elected officials, helping local advocates inform oversight agencies about the shortcomings in local housing plans, and assisting advocates in ensuring that housing policies are implemented fully and in a timely way. In addition, the project is helping to build a regional coalition of local affordable housing advocates.

Public Advocates. The *Education Project* seeks to improve educational opportunities for California's low-income students, students of color, and English language learners. The project conducts trainings on educational rights for community groups, researches and analyzes legal issues impacting educational equity, develops policy proposals, and works with the California Quality Education Commission in its efforts to define the minimum quality education all children need. Access to books and the percentage of credentialed teachers are two of the educational equity issues the project works to improve.

Public Counsel. The *Children's Rights Project* works to dramatically increase the number of children being adopted out of the Los Angeles County foster care system. The project, through a network of staff and volunteers (attorneys and others), works to eliminate the backlog of adoption cases and move newer cases along. The project places particular emphasis on children who are Native American or have special educational needs or other mental or physical difficulties. After identifying unmet mental, emotional, and physical needs of foster care children, a staff social worker then advocates on behalf of the children and their adoptive families to secure needed educational and health benefits. The project ensures that foster care children can achieve a permanent, loving home and an opportunity for a better future.

Public Counsel. The *Consumer Law Project* assists clients in Los Angeles with a variety of consumer issues including identity theft, unscrupulous home improvement contractors, auto fraud, home equity fraud, notario fraud, unfair debt collection practices, and bankruptcy. Weekly

legal clinics to assist low-income consumers are held in collaboration with other legal aid programs. Project attorneys and hundreds of volunteer attorneys provide legal advice and direct representation. Community outreach and education is also conducted, particularly to minority communities.

Public Counsel. The *Homelessness Prevention Law Project* strives to reduce the number of homeless individuals in Los Angeles County by focusing on the needs of populations that are at high risk of becoming chronically homeless. Law students, along with attorneys from 40 law firms, provide critical legal advocacy services in multiple Department of Public Social Services offices to homeless individuals and those at risk of becoming homeless. Pro bono attorneys also provide representation before administrative agencies to homeless individuals and families to secure food, shelter, clothing, and other vital benefits. In addition, the project advocates for systemic changes to the General Relief program in order to more swiftly and efficiently deliver food and shelter to homeless and hungry individuals, and it trains social service and agency personnel to increase their understanding and effectiveness on behalf of the homeless population. The clients assisted increasingly include the working poor who need programs such as Food Stamps to help feed their families.

Public Counsel. The *Immigrants' Rights Project* provides legal assistance in Los Angeles County to individuals in the areas of asylum, special immigrant juvenile status matters, and self-petitions under the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA). Self-petitions for immigration status are allowed for immigrants who have been physically abused or subjected to extreme mental cruelty by a U.S. citizen or permanent resident who is a spouse or parent. This process allows the battered immigrant to leave an abusive relationship without being subject to deportation. The project provides counsel and advice, direct representation, translation services, and document preparation in support of VAWA petitions.

Public Interest Clearinghouse. The *CalJustice Technology Project* is a multifaceted project that coordinates the development of technology to benefit legal aid programs and clients in California. The project coordinates the development of the statewide Web site that provides legal education information for the client community and resources for legal aid advocates. The project is also developing computer software to audit and improve legal aid management practices and a computerized intake module for predatory lending cases. In addition, the project coordinates the CalJustice Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives from legal aid programs, the courts, and the State Bar of California, which provides valuable input into the development of technology for legal aid programs and clients.

Public Interest Law Project. The *Redevelopment and Protection of Low-Income Neighborhoods and Their Residents Project* provides assistance to legal aid providers and public interest advocates to ensure effective advocacy. This program develops training materials and provides training on redevelopment issues, with an emphasis on relocation assistance and replacement housing obligations as well as the interrelationship of redevelopment laws with other land use and planning laws. The project also uses litigation to enforce relocation and replacement housing statutes. In addition, the project, in collaboration with the Western Center on Law and Poverty, advocates for legislative and regulatory changes to strengthen anti-displacement protections for low-income residents and their communities.

Public Law Center. The *Southeast Asian Legal Outreach Project* provides legal assistance to Orange County's large Vietnamese population, which is predominantly monolingual Vietnamese-speaking. The project provides the community with linguistically and culturally appropriate information and representation at clinic settings in the Vietnamese community. The clinics are staffed by the project's Vietnamese-American attorney and volunteer attorneys and law students recruited primarily from two local minority bar associations. Assistance is given in the areas of family, housing, benefits, immigration, and consumer law. In addition, the project conducts extensive outreach into the Vietnamese community using a variety of media, including radio, newspapers, and "know your rights" brochures.

Public Law Center. The *Community Legal Clinic Project* conducts legal clinics for low-income individuals, particularly targeting homeless persons and the large Latino population in Orange County. The clinics are held at a variety of places in the community, including a homeless services provider in Costa Mesa and a Santa Ana community center. The clinics, staffed primarily by volunteer attorneys and law students, are used to provide counsel and advice and brief services to clients and to be a point of entry for more extended services for more complicated matters. Most cases are in the areas of family, housing, benefits, immigration, and consumer law.

Public Service Law Corporation of the Riverside County Bar. The *Guardianship Assistance Project* provides assistance to individuals filing for guardianship of children in the probate courts. Many individuals assisted are grandparents who are caring for their grandchildren. The court branches have agreed to hear all self-represented guardianship matters on specific days of the week. The project attorney is in court at the time the guardianship calendar is called and is available to provide immediate assistance to litigants having difficulty with court procedures. If litigants need more than brief advice, volunteer or contract attorneys and project staff give further service as appropriate.

San Diego Advocates for Social Justice. The *Civil Society Project* provides legal support to three nonprofit organizations and their low-income constituents for affordable housing and tenant rights' advocacy. Each of the nonprofits works with hundreds of low-income individuals and families through community and congregation-based organizations in low-income neighborhoods. As issues are identified by the residents, the project provides research, analysis, drafting of documents, and advocacy support. If requested, project staff also attends meetings or negotiations with or on behalf of the organizations and their constituents. Issues the project works on include code enforcement, just cause evictions, and community planning processes.

San Diego Volunteer Lawyer Program. The *Domestic Violence Prevention Project*, a court-based program organized in collaboration with the Superior Court of San Diego County, provides legal assistance to victims of domestic violence in completing the application for a temporary domestic violence restraining order. Staff attorneys, volunteer attorneys, and other volunteers supervised by one of the attorneys instruct victims on the filing process and give referrals for ongoing legal assistance, counseling, shelter, and other appropriate support services. The project's goal is to serve all unrepresented individuals. Those targeted are female victims of

domestic violence and their children, seniors in abusive domestic circumstances, and those who are monolingual in Spanish.

Santa Clara County Asian Law Alliance. The *Citizenship Assistance Project* in Santa Clara County uses a two-pronged strategy to assist immigrants and refugees who are applying for citizenship. First, outreach and community education presentations are given on the procedures and benefits of applying for U.S. citizenship. Targeted outreach is conducted at senior centers, community organizations, and English as a Second Language centers, and radio, TV, and print media are also used to reach out to the community. The second prong involves assisting immigrants with completing citizenship applications, obtaining needed documents, preparing for the citizenship interview, and completing the disability exception form. The project targets its services to limited-English-speaking Asian and Pacific Islander refugees and immigrants with a special emphasis on the elderly and disabled.

Santa Clara University's Katharine and George Alexander Community Law Center. The *Workers' Rights Advice Clinic* provides assistance to low-wage workers, most of whom work in service industries and many of whom are currently unemployed. More than half the clients do not speak English and the large majority are immigrants. Law students, under the supervision of a faculty member, provide legal advice at weekly clinics. Assistance is given with wage claims, discrimination complaints, unemployment benefit claims, and wrongful termination cases. The law students receive law school credit for their participation. Many clients receive money for lost wages, unpaid overtime, and penalties after they are given information and assistance in filing the necessary paperwork.

Senior Adults Legal Assistance. The *Legal Assistance to Underserved Elders Project* provides legal assistance to Santa Clara County elders to support their efforts to live independently, safely, noninstitutionalized, and with dignity. The project focuses on elders with low income or at risk of abuse, exploitation, or premature institutionalization. A project attorney meets with clients through monthly sessions at both north and south county senior centers. Legal assistance is given primarily in the areas of public benefits, housing, elder abuse, long-term care, Medi-gap issues, HMO disputes, and advance health care directives.

Senior Advocacy Project of Northern California. The *Expanded Outreach Services Project* provides services to the rural areas of five counties. Services include legal advice, self-help assistance, document review, preparation of legal documents, and representation before administrative agencies and courts. The project assists with areas of law that include elder abuse, estate planning, wills, advance health care directives, durable powers of attorney, and debt relief counseling. A new area is grandparents raising grandchildren, in which the project provides consultation and representation to grandparents seeking guardianship of their grandchildren.

Senior Citizens Legal Services. The *Elder Abuse Prevention Project* assists seniors in Santa Clara and San Benito Counties who are at risk of suffering from financial, physical, or emotional abuse or neglect. The project advocates on behalf of seniors whose property or income, necessary for their survival, is threatened or already stolen by fraud or deceit. The project also assists institutionalized seniors in nursing homes with neglect issues and seniors who need conservatorships in order to prevent possible financial abuse or neglect. Services include advice,

counsel, and representation. In addition, the project works with law enforcement organizations to coordinate local government and nonprofit services available to address both criminal and civil aspects of elder abuse cases.

Senior Law Project. The *In-Home Supportive Services Advocacy Project* works with elderly individuals who receive In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) and advisory committees in Lake and Mendocino Counties to advocate for reforms that will make IHSS more accessible to recipients, particularly those with severe mental and/or physical disabilities. The project attorney is working particularly with the advisory committee in Lake County to fine-tune and implement recommended operating procedures, protocols, and policies for reform of Lake County's IHSS program. The project attorney also provides counsel and representation to individuals who have been improperly denied IHSS benefits and advises elderly individuals on home-care rights and options.

Sonoma County Legal Aid. The *Self-Help Access Center* is a walk-in center located at the Sonoma County Court, Hall of Justice. The center provides information and referrals to the public and more in-depth services for low-income clients, including consultation and legal needs assessment, legal forms preparation, coaching for court appearances, and referral to other appropriate organizations. The targeted populations are low-income self-represented litigants with family law and housing problems and Spanish-speaking litigants. In addition to services provided by staff of the center, volunteer attorneys provide advice and counsel to the clients, and volunteer interpreters assist Spanish-speaking litigants with intake forms and translate during consultations. The Superior Court of Sonoma County is a strong partner with the center, playing an active role in coordinating all court-based self-help services.

Sonoma County Legal Aid. The *Home Loss Prevention Project* is an early intervention strategy to protect low-income families, particularly women with children, from becoming homeless due to lack of information, access to the courts, and representation during eviction proceedings. Legal information and services are available to low-income tenants facing eviction through a clinic staffed by volunteer attorneys and the Self Help Access Center located at the Sonoma County courthouse. The focus of the project is negotiation with the landlord and/or opposing counsel to save the tenancy or obtain extra time to move. In addition to legal advice and form preparation, clients view a video that prepares them to represent themselves more effectively in court. Clinic volunteer attorneys also provide legal representation at trial, when appropriate, and the project provides information and referrals to organizations that address the underlying and ancillary problems resulting in the eviction, such as lack of unemployment or drug use.

The Impact Fund. The *Strategic Training in Impact Litigation Project* seeks to increase the number of public interest lawyers who have the skills and abilities to successfully bring impact litigation that will ensure justice to low-income communities in California. The project provides practical training to new and experienced attorneys in the area of complex public interest litigation in locations around the state. The project also helps arrange partnering of less experienced legal aid attorneys with more seasoned practitioners to co-counsel on impact litigation.

The Impact Fund. The *Strategic Advocacy in Support of Public Interest Litigation Project* undertakes advocacy efforts to protect and enhance the means for bringing public interest litigation in California. The project monitors legislative and judicial developments that affect impact litigation. When judicial decisions threaten impact litigation mechanisms, the project prepares and files *amicus* briefs on behalf of legal aid providers that would be affected. Legislative and other advocacy is undertaken to protect, and possibly improve, the available remedies. The project's work helps keep impact litigation, primarily in the area of civil rights, available for clients who need protection and enforcement of their rights.

UC Davis School of Law Legal Clinics. The *King Hall Immigration Detention Project* assists detainees in immigration detention with legal orientations and representation. Law students, under the supervision of a clinical instructor, investigate detention cases and advise detainees as to bond eligibility and relief from removal. KHID also provides technical assistance to volunteer attorneys who assist detainees in immigration proceedings. Additionally, KHID provides technical assistance to public defenders regarding the immigration consequences of criminal convictions, mandatory immigration detention and post-conviction relief. Cases selected for representation depend on various criteria including the potential for law reform, issues involving post-removal detention, asylum-seekers and detainees with criminal convictions.

USC Law School Litigation Clinics. The *Detained Immigrant Mental Competency Project* provides representation to detained mentally ill immigrants in immigration removal proceedings at the immigration detention facility on Terminal Island. The immigration judges refer individuals who suffer from a mental impairment to the project. USC graduate psychology students, under the supervision of a clinical psychology professor, perform psychological assessments of each detainee and conduct independent evaluations to determine the detainee's ability to competently assist with the case. If the detainee is found mentally competent, the project represents that client with whatever form of relief may be available before the immigration court. If the detained client is found not competent, the project works with mental health professionals to advocate for appropriate medical and psychological care and monitors the provision of that care to the extent possible. Legal representation in connection with the immigration removal proceedings is provided at a later date if it becomes appropriate.

USC Law School Litigation Clinics. The *799 Habeas Project* assists incarcerated battered women who request assistance in filing a civil habeas petition under a new California law that allows for overturning convictions of a homicide crime under certain circumstances. Project attorneys and law students interview the women requesting assistance and investigate whether they may have a case under this new law—if the woman can demonstrate that she was battered by the victim, did not have expert evidence on the effects of battering presented at her trial, and her case was prejudiced by the lack of such evidence. If a woman's case has merit, the project represents her or refers her to a volunteer attorney. The project also works with the California Women's Law Center to identify and train the volunteer attorneys.

USC Law School Litigation Clinics. The *Mariel Cuban Detainee Project* represents Mariel Cuban detainees at Lompoc Federal Penitentiary. Each detainee is entitled to an interview with an immigration and customs officer once a year. Volunteer attorneys and law students who have

been trained by the project review the client's file, interview the client, obtain support letters and other release plan information, and then represent the client in their interview.

USD Legal Clinic. The *Small Claims Clinic* provides assistance in San Diego County to low-income self-represented litigants with limited English proficiency who need more assistance than the small claims court advisors can provide. Law students, under the supervision of an attorney, provide one-on-one assistance in the law and in preparing the facts for those clients who are already in the system. Students negotiate with the opposing party and attempt to resolve the case prior to trial. If a case is going to trial, students help clients to prepare their oral presentation, to obtain and organize exhibits, and to subpoena and examine witnesses, if appropriate. If a losing defendant appeals, the clinic may represent the plaintiff on appeal as both sides can be represented by counsel during appeals. The clinic also conducts outreach to promote understanding of the functions and procedures of small claims court.

USD Legal Clinic. The *Special Education Outreach Project* partners with a community-based resource center to provide information, technical assistance, consultation, and advice to Spanish-speaking low-income parents of children with disabilities that qualify them for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Act. The project distributes materials in Spanish that explain how to access special education services and the timelines and levels of service. These materials are then made available at the resource center, enabling families to request the needed services from the schools. The project attorney and law students answer questions, guide families through the special education process, and provide further services to some families.

Voluntary Legal Services of Northern California. The *Employment Law Clinic* educates and advises low-income individuals in Sacramento County about their legal rights when they encounter a job-related problem. Clinic staff, volunteer attorneys, and law students provide clients with brief service, as well as extended representation where appropriate. They assist with unemployment insurance appeals, wage and hour claims, discrimination complaints, and demand letters to employers ranging from workplace defamation to access to personnel records. Workers who are able to solve their past employment problems are able to return to work more quickly or receive money owed to them; workers encountering problems with their present employers are able to resolve their problems without jeopardizing their jobs.

Voluntary Legal Services of Northern California. The central purpose of the *Debt Collection Defense Clinic/Bankruptcy Clinic* is to educate low-income families about their rights and responsibilities when they are in debt and to provide guidance and support to self-represented litigants. Debt collection clinics empower clients to represent themselves in court, handle abusive collection tactics employed by collection agencies, negotiate settlements with creditors, and correct erroneous information contained in their credit reports. The clinics also provide extended services when needed. The bankruptcy clinic provides assistance to self-represented petitioners, helping to reduce the errors that individuals make when filing their petitions and decreasing the likelihood their petitions will be dismissed. The bankruptcy clinic's target populations are the working poor and vulnerable or elderly individuals with health issues exacerbated by creditor harassment. Clinic are staffed by project staff and volunteer attorneys, paralegals, and law students.

Western Center on Law and Poverty. *Getting and Keeping Medi-Cal Benefits: An Advocates' Guide to Medi-Cal Eligibility*, a manual written by project staff, imparts a “big picture” understanding of the Medi-Cal program and refers advocates to applicable state and federal statutes, regulations, and treatises to aid in their in-depth research on behalf of clients. The manual is distributed to legal aid providers and other health advocates in California to better inform them about the complex Medi-Cal eligibility categories and rules and about the interplay of the Medi-Cal eligibility/retention rules and rules of other programs, such as CalWORKs or Food Stamps. Advocates are then better able to represent their clients with Medi-Cal applications, benefits, and retention.

Western Law Center for Disability Rights. An Equal Access attorney in the *Civil Rights Litigation Project* in Los Angeles provides legal representation to people with disabilities who are encountering discrimination in violation of their civil rights. The attorney works with law students from Loyola Law School and volunteer attorneys on a variety of impact cases involving disability rights. The project reaches out to members of underserved minority groups, including the Hispanic and Asian Pacific Islander communities.

Youth Law Center. The *Foster and Kinship Care Advocacy Project* provides assistance to legal aid advocates and their clients on legal issues related to adoption and relative caregiver issues. The project attorney provides training, technical assistance, and consultation on issues such as foster care, guardianships, CalWORKs, Kin-Gap, and Adoption Assistance benefits so legal aid advocates can give better legal assistance to the growing number of low-income grandparents who are caring for their grandchildren. The project distributes the *California Relative Caregivers Guide* on CD to each legal aid program, increasing their ability to research legal issues for relative caregivers.

Yuba Sutter Legal Center. The *Rural Outreach Project* provides legal assistance to seniors in local sites monthly in Brownsville in Yuba County and in Live Oak in Sutter County. The project attorney also goes to seniors' homes if they lack transportation to an outreach site. Services, including advice and counsel and preparation of legal forms, are given by the project attorney in the areas of SSI, Social Security, health care, debt relief, housing, and elder abuse.

Yuba Sutter Legal Center. The *Institutionalized Outreach Project* provides legal assistance to seniors who are institutionalized in one of Sutter County's nursing homes or board and care homes. The project paralegal visits facilities weekly to meet with seniors who request assistance. The project provides legal advice, prepares legal documents, and represents clients in administrative hearings. Many legal issues involve SSI, Medi-Cal, or powers of attorney. The assistance results in the seniors being able to assert their legal rights, plan their futures, and improve their quality of life.

